



NTSB National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Highway Safety

Driver Performance

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Investigation Overview

- Driver's Fitness for Duty
- Driver's Experience
- Driver's Cellular Telephone Use
- Accident Investigation Experience
- Cellular Telephone Use
- Cellular Telephone Research
- Accident Data

Driver's Fitness for Duty

- Good general health
- No medications, toxicology negative
- Adequate opportunity for sleep
- Medically certificated

Driver's Experience

- Valid CDL
- Completed motor carrier's driver training
- 9 months' experience
- Previously driven accident route

Driver's Cellular Telephone Use

- Driver used hands-free cellular telephone
- 12-minute conversation documented
- Driver and witnesses reported use

Accident Investigation Experience

- Largo, Maryland (2002)
- Inexperienced driver
- Unfamiliar with vehicle
- Distracted by use of hand-held cellular telephone
- Recommended States prohibit use by learners and intermediate drivers

Cellular Telephone Use

- Over 204 million subscribers
- 30% report use while driving
- NHTSA reports 974,000 drivers using hand-held cellular telephones at any given daylight moment

Naturalistic Research

- Naturalistic driving study (NHTSA, 2006)
 - Cellular telephone was most common distraction observed
 - Accident risk increased up to 3 times

Additional Research

- Driving performance impaired
 - Slower reaction times
 - Drive more slowly
 - Maintain greater following distances
 - Reduced awareness of driving environment
- Primarily a cognitive distraction
- Hands-free offers little, if any, improvement

Accident Data

- FARS 2005
 - All Drivers
 - Cellular telephone used by driver: 135 (0.23 percent)
 - Cellular telephone present in vehicle: 726 (1.2 percent)
 - Bus Drivers
 - Cellular telephone used by driver: 1 (0.35 percent)
 - Cellular telephone present in vehicle: 5 (1.8 percent)
- Data incomplete
- Data insufficient to identify full scope of U.S. problem



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